



H.Res. 909 - Commemorating the courage of the Haitian soldiers that fought for American independence in the 'Siege of Savannah' and for Haiti's independence and renunciation of slavery

FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 909 is being considered on the House floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) on January 29, 2008. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Homeland Security but was not considered.

H.Res. 909 expected to be considered on the House floor on February 12, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.Res. 909 resolves that the House of Representatives commemorates the courage of the Haitian soldiers that fought for American independence in the 'Siege of Savannah' and for Haiti's independence and renunciation of slavery.

BACKGROUND

In the fall of 1779, a unit of over 500 Haitian soldiers of the Chasseurs-Volontaires de Saint Domingue volunteered to join in the American Revolutionary War effort, and assist in a joint American and French effort to retake the city of Savannah, Georgia from the British forces. Over 300 Haitian soldiers lost their lives in the battle, and the attempt to drive the British from Savannah failed.

The battle is commemorated every year with a presidential proclamation on General Kazimierz Pulaski Memorial Day, which honors General Pulaski, a Polish Count who was killed at the Siege of Savannah while fighting alongside Revolutionary forces.

In the late 18th century, Haiti's nearly half million slaves revolted under Toussaint L'Ouverture. Haiti became the first black republic to declare its independence in 1804.

In February of 2004, Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted after an armed rebellion. An interim government under auspices of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was installed to organize new and democratic elections in Haiti. In May of 2006, Haiti inaugurated a democratically elected president and parliament.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information contact Justin Hanson at (202) 226-2302.